

[11.03 a.m.]

KEELTY, Commissioner Michael Joseph, Commissioner, Australian Federal Police

McDEVITT, Federal Agent Brendan Joseph, General Manager National Operations, Australian Federal Police

CHAIR—Welcome. Commissioner Keelty, I gather we may have a problem in terms of your time, about which the committee has been advised for quite some time. The AFP has lodged submission No. 32 with the committee. Do you wish to make any amendments or alterations to that submission?

Commissioner Keelty—No, Senator.

CHAIR—I now invite you to make a short opening statement, at the conclusion of which, obviously, there will be questions.

Commissioner Keelty—Thank you, Senator. For the benefit of members of the committee, I will briefly cover the role and functions of the Australian Federal Police prior to providing the committee with the AFP's view of the [Migration Legislation Amendment \(Further Border Protection Measures\) Bill 2002](#). The AFP's functions are set out in section 8 of Australian Federal Police Act 1979. Within that framework, under section 37(2) of the Australian Federal Police Act 1979, the AFP receives a ministerial direction that outlines the government's priorities and expectations of the AFP for a given period.

On 27 September 2000, the Minister for Justice and Customs issued a supplementary ministerial direction under section 37(2) stating that the government expects the AFP to give special emphasis to countering and otherwise investigating organised people-smuggling. The direction went on to state that the AFP should also ensure that it provides an effective contribution to the implementation of the government's whole of government approach to unauthorised arrivals.

The AFP has a responsibility to enforce the criminal provisions of the Migration Act 1958. The translation of these responsibilities into operational arrangements is supported by an appropriate service level agreement with the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs. The AFP's role is to conduct investigations under the relevant legislation with a view to obtaining evidence for prosecutions. In particular, the AFP engages in targeting the facilitators of people-smuggling ventures. These are the people who arrange for the marketing of opportunities for potential passengers, organise their travel to embarkation points, coordinate and provide vessels and employ crews. To a lesser extent, the AFP also investigates and attempts to bring to court the crews of the suspected illegal entry vessels arriving in Australian waters. The AFP does not investigate the passengers on board these vessels who are variously described as unlawful non-citizens, refugees, asylum seekers or illegal immigrants.

Upon arrival in Australia's migration zone, the responsibility for dealing with these people lies with DIMIA and the Australian Customs Service. Since July 2000 a joint AFP-DIMIA

strike team was established as a result of increasing concerns about a number of potential unauthorised arrivals bound for Australia. As well as this, an expansion of the AFP and DIMIA overseas liaison officer networks has increased law enforcement assistance to the Middle East and Asia-Pacific countries in addition to targeted assistance to Indonesia.

The flow of illegal immigrants may be described in three phases. The first phase involves the departure from their home country, the second phase being the transit point and the third phase being their journey to Australia. As we have seen in the past, not one of these phases remains constant. The AFP does not have a border protection role in the same way that the committee would understand that the Customs Service, DIMIA, Coastwatch or the Australian Defence Force have.

Our role in protecting Australia's borders lies in our provision of an investigative function for offences that occur across national borders and the collection and provision of intelligence relating to such offences. The AFP maintains a very strong focus on fighting these crimes offshore—now commonly referred to as transnational crimes. The committee would be aware that the AFP has no criminal jurisdiction—that is, police powers—beyond Australia's borders and, as such, we do not have an operational role in other countries. The AFP makes up for this limitation by seeking the assistance of, and collaboration with, overseas law enforcement agencies. The processes we have in place offshore combined with investigative efforts in Australia have been successful in bringing people responsible for organised people-smuggling before overseas and Australian courts.

In conclusion, based on previous experience the AFP has already anticipated that the current successes in preventing, deterring and arresting those involved in seaborne people-smuggling will drive the people smugglers to either evolve new methodologies to evade detection or return to more covert means of illegal arrival in Australia. It is not foreseen that changes accompanying the introduction of the proposed amendments will affect the ability of the AFP to fulfil its role. In fact, the AFP views the proposed changes as potentially beneficial in the wider context as they are designed to send a deterrent message to potential smugglers and traffickers. Resultant changes should be understood to be, in effect, target hardening in terms of the ability of smugglers to get illegal immigrants to Australia and into the immigration process, and a deflection of illegal immigrants to regional centres with better infrastructure.

Senator PAYNE—Commissioner, as you know—and as you have acknowledged in your submission and this morning—this has become, if you like, the second phase of this excision process. What was the impact on the AFP of the changes that were made in the excision legislation last year, if there was any?

Commissioner Keelty—We could not be definite about the impact of the excision changes alone—obviously Operation Relex has had some impact as well. But to give you an indication, in 1999, 47 boats arrived at Ashmore Reef; in 2000, 39 boats arrived at Ashmore reef; and, in 2001, 20 boats arrived at Ashmore Reef. In addition to that 20, about four were handled by the Operation Relex teams. Each time one of those vessels arrived at Ashmore Reef, anything up to three AFP officers would have to go out to Ashmore Reef to enforce the migration zone legislation. It had quite a substantial resource impact on the AFP prior to the first phase of the excision legislation. As I say, it is difficult to put an actual figure on it because Operation Relex was operating at the same time.

Senator PAYNE—The focus of the AFP’s submission is about addressing transnational organised crime—understandably, I suspect. That is essentially because the AFP does not have a role in the observation of international obligations and things like that, isn’t it? Your role is in the criminal aspects of this entire process?

Commissioner Keelty—That is correct.

Senator PAYNE—Do you envisage that, if the proposed excision goes ahead, it will have an impact on AFP resourcing? If so, what would that impact be?

Commissioner Keelty—For example, there is only one Australian Federal Police officer stationed in the Torres Strait, based on Thursday Island. The Torres Strait consists of many islands. We would see the application of the excision legislation assisting us to monitor the movements of the people smugglers and the crews who, if they still intended on arriving in Australia, we would hope would come to places where there is better infrastructure to facilitate their arrival.

Senator PAYNE—What does that do to your resourcing?

Commissioner Keelty—If we are resourcing it, it assists us because they do not arrive in remote locations where we would have to deploy our resources. For example, Thursday Island is two hours by air from Cairns, so the infrastructure there is minimal.

Senator PAYNE—In your submission and your observations this morning you made a point about there being three phases in the flow of the unlawful arrivals process: departure from home country, the transit point and the journey to Australia. Is there any evidence that there are people who come in two phases—that is, departure from the home country straight to Australia, without a transit point? Can you tell us what the balance in numbers is?

Commissioner Keelty—I cannot give you the balance in numbers, but there are examples of where they do that—those are arrivals by air.

Senator PAYNE—Of course.

Commissioner Keelty—Prior to people being smuggled by boat, that was the most common way of illegal immigrants arriving in Australia. I do not have the figures, though. But one of the things that is now public knowledge is this event that has occurred in East Timor. It has been reported in the press in recent days. We have always been concerned about East Timor being used for its infrastructure and about the development of the criminal justice system in East Timor as being exposed to operations by transnational crime figures. A boat has arrived in East Timor—and I can talk about this because there is never likely to be a prosecution in Australia on this matter—with Sri Lankans on board but, interestingly enough, the Sri Lankans who appear to have organised it have gone from the point of embarkation and arrived in East Timor to facilitate the arrival of the vessel to East Timor en route to New Zealand. We have not seen that strategy used by the people smugglers before. From our own perspective, this is an indication of the flexibility of the people smugglers to now try and reassure people that they can get them to their point of destination more so now than they might have been able to do before.

Senator PAYNE—Does the AFP have any involvement in that circumstance in East Timor at the moment?

Commissioner Keelty—It is obviously a matter for the East Timorese authorities under the new regime there, but we have provided some assistance by sending members of the people-smuggling team to impart to them the knowledge and skills that they might need to investigate the matter. That was done as a request of the East Timorese Police.

Senator PAYNE—In conclusion, you mentioned then the People Smuggling Task Force again. Could you give us an update on the AFP's activity in that area? I will then go back to the chair.

Commissioner Keelty—I might hand over on that point to Mr McDevitt.

Federal Agent McDevitt—In broad terms, Senator, we continue to maintain a people-smuggling strike team, which is staffed by DIMIA and AFP. We have 10 staff in it; DIMIA have five staff in it. It is a combination of investigators, intelligence analysts and specialists. They continue to be actively engaged in their primary role, which is to participate in activities designed to target high-level facilitators of people-smuggling activities.

Senator PAYNE—Is that task force consulted in the development of legislation such as this?

Federal Agent McDevitt—That is correct.

Senator PAYNE—Thank you.

CHAIR—Following on from that—and I know DIMIA are not here now—

Senator PAYNE—I am sure they are listening.

CHAIR—They will get notice of it. I would like to place on record a question on notice, asking DIMIA for details of who is on the task force, when the task force has met since May this year and who has been present at the meetings. I suppose we can pass those questions on to them. Is the boat that you mentioned that landed in East Timor the same boat, from what you understand, as the boat that was mooted publicly, at about the start of June, as being a boat coming to Australia?

Commissioner Keelty—No, Senator. That is a different vessel.

CHAIR—What happened to the 'ghost boat'?

Commissioner Keelty—That is currently the subject of continuing investigations, Senator.

CHAIR—Sure. There were suggestions at the time that it was full of Vietnamese people. Is that something that has been confirmed since?

Commissioner Keelty—I do not have any detail. I am not sure if Mr McDevitt has detail about the passengers on board the vessel.

Federal Agent McDevitt—We had had reports from time to time, over recent months, about a vessel which allegedly had departed Vietnam and apparently contained up to 34 Vietnamese people on board. I am not sure what the latest state of play is in terms of intelligence or sightings of that particular vessel.

CHAIR—Right. But the reports that you had were initially from Vietnam, weren't they? They were not from the Indonesian end?

Federal Agent McDevitt—I would have to take that on notice, Senator.

CHAIR—Could you take on notice that question, together with the question of when those first reports came to your attention and the task force's attention. We have not had a Vietnamese boat for quite a few years—I think since 1994 or thereabouts. You say you do not know where that boat is now but, at some stage, over the last month or so, you must have lost contact with information about that boat. There must have been a stop in the update of intelligence that you might have had on that boat. Can you tell us when you last had a sighting of the boat?

Federal Agent McDevitt—We will take that on notice, Senator.

CHAIR—Do you always work on single source information?

Federal Agent McDevitt—Wherever possible, we try to seek corroboration of single source information. The unfortunate reality is that, at times, that is all we have.

CHAIR—In this particular case, the minister's briefings to the media were that it was single source information. Would that single source have been from Vietnam or would it have been from further down the track?

Federal Agent McDevitt—It is probably preferable that we did not actually give that sort of detail.

CHAIR—I do not know about that. I am sensitive to this issue, but we all know that you have sources in Vietnam and we all know you have sources in Indonesia. I am just asking: which leg of the operation was the source of the information? Could you take that on notice and get back to us?

Commissioner Keelty—Yes. The sensitivity is in possibly identifying where the source is. Perhaps we can answer the question by saying that the source is not in Vietnam.

CHAIR—Thank you.

Federal Agent McDevitt—I would like to offer one point of clarification in relation to your earlier question about the People Smuggling Task Force. There are two very distinct entities that the AFP contributes to: one is the People-Smuggling Strike Team, the joint team between the

AFP and DIMIA that I described earlier. The other is the People Smuggling Task Force, which is a high-level government task force that, obviously, the AFP participates in but which is a very separate entity to the strike team. I would like to make sure that is clarified.

CHAIR—Thank you for that. Who chairs the task force? Is it PM&C?

Federal Agent McDevitt—I would have to take that on notice. My understanding is that it was initially chaired by PM&C and that, at this point in time, the chairmanship has now moved across to DIMIA.

CHAIR—Would you take that on notice as well and give us an answer. Commissioner Keelty, you have confirmed what Immigration told us. In their answer they said:

The Bill, by extending excised offshore places to islands off the northern coast of Australia, and therefore requiring people smugglers to bring their vessels closer to mainland Australia ...

Are you anticipating that the vessels will now come closer to mainland Australia?

Commissioner Keelty—That would be what we anticipate for those vessels intending to arrive in Australia: rather than leave the passengers to the unknown fate of arriving on a remote island or reef, they would be forced to come to the mainland.

CHAIR—If people smugglers get more creative, that would make the job almost impossible for you, wouldn't it? You have a fairly extensive mainland to protect.

Commissioner Keelty—That is right—and when I say that I mean that you are right about the mainland of Australia—but, as pointed out in the figures I gave in the previous answer, it is more difficult for us to send resources to remote areas, because of the lack of infrastructure. At least if they come to the Australian mainland there is the potential for us to do something about them. The idea is to force them into the mainstream activity, and this is a deterrent to leaving passengers to their own fate on remote islands, where we have had people die.

CHAIR—It is good to see that someone cares.

Commissioner Keelty—We do care, and it does not matter whether they are the people smugglers themselves or whether they are the passengers. This is a far preferable way for us to go, instead of having them left on a remote island.

CHAIR—So, basically, you are saying you would prefer them on the mainland, that you think this legislation will bring them there and that they will then be more manageable for you.

Commissioner Keelty—Yes. In a nutshell, and I think you touched upon it, as we advance any policy in law enforcement, whether that be Immigration policy or otherwise, the flexibility of the people smugglers is the flexibility of most transnational criminals, which is the ability to work around the current legislation. We see this legislation as being a useful deterrent. The whole object is to force people to come to Australia through the correct procedures but, if they are going to commit a crime in the way they are sending people to Australia, we can at least try to get them sent to where there is a some infrastructure support for them.

CHAIR—Does that mean you will have to very quickly shift resources from one part of the coast to another?

Commissioner Keelty—We may do, but we do that in one sense for other types of transnational crime, such as drug trafficking.

CHAIR—The focus of your submission seems to be on the people smugglers as opposed to those who are keen to get here. Do you anticipate them actually arriving on boats as well, or do you think their practice has been to send the boat along and they themselves do not come within our territorial zone?

Commissioner Keelty—I will break them down into two areas. I think you are right: the main people who are organising this are offshore. However, in 2000-01, we arrested and prosecuted 178 crew; in 2001 to February this year, we prosecuted 67 crew. The crews are complicit in the crime. I want to point out to you that the boat with Sri Lankan passengers that arrived in East Timor is significant for another reason—with the publicity surrounding the fate of SIEVX, it would seem that those people who have paid money to be facilitated to Australia are demanding much more reassurance from the people smugglers about their safe arrival into Australia. We are now seeing a bit of a trend forming—and it is too early to say how much of a trend it is—with the people smugglers having to escort the passengers, albeit at each point of destination, to reassure them that they will be properly and safely facilitated.

CHAIR—It would not surprise you, however, that asylum seekers—the passengers we are talking about—are more than likely to be of middle class with a bit of a profile in the country, and that they are fleeing from persecution because of that profile?

Commissioner Keelty—They come in different grades. Some of them arrive in Indonesia on first-class plane tickets. Mixed amongst the legitimate asylum seekers are some people who are trying to get to Australia. That is the real problem; that is the real dilemma.

CHAIR—My point to you, though, is that it is not surprising that those with the resources could also be asylum seekers. I think history shows that they are the one most likely to be in conflict with oppressive governments.

Commissioner Keelty—I accept what you are saying. I would only add that obviously there is a mix of people.

CHAIR—You say in your submission that you have not had occasion to investigate or prosecute any of the asylum seekers. No evidence of criminality with respect to any of them over the last couple of years has been brought to your attention?

Commissioner Keelty—Not in terms of the Migration Act. If they have come to our attention for criminal investigation, it is more likely to have been once they have arrived in Australia and any issues that might have occurred at a detention centre.

CHAIR—But with all the security checking, police checking and so on that is pretty comprehensively done in this country, there has not been occasion for you to check, to

prosecute or to determine that someone who has come on the boat, other than crew, has a criminal record?

Commissioner Keelty—Generally speaking I would say the answer is no, but I will take it on notice in case there are some notable exceptions.

CHAIR—There might be the odd one. I am bemused now. You talk about this legislation driving people onshore but, by doing that, the legislation does not have any effect on them. So in a legal sense it is your preference to have the people onshore—and, in those circumstances, they have some very limited rights of access to the Australian legal system—but, in doing so, the excision zone concept is not available to the government to remove them. At the end of a few hours of hearings, I am still trying to work out whether the excision legislation does anything more than satisfy your direct interests—and, consequently, Australia's—by having people driven onshore. You would prefer to see that they are driven here, and I presume you can handle them.

Commissioner Keelty—If they are left to the vagaries of tidal and weather changes, as well as there being no food or fresh water available on many of the islands covered by the proposed legislation, there is a humanitarian factor as well as a law enforcement factor.

CHAIR—That is good. I suppose the final question I have before going to other senators is: in terms of shifting people on to the Australian coast, do you need to enhance any links you have with Indigenous communities along the north, north-west coast? Do you need to resource them anymore? Is that something that is a part of continuing programs?

Commissioner Keelty—It would be a part of continuing programs as we look to see what trends develop. Certainly we have a very good relationship with the Indigenous communities of the Torres Strait and we have a relationship with the Indigenous communities in north-western Australia, where we have an AFP presence, but we would need to watch the trend on that and see where else we need to focus our activities.

CHAIR—But there have not been consultations thus far?

Commissioner Keelty—That is correct, Senator—not beyond what I just described.

CHAIR—I have taken up too much time. Senator Scullion?

Senator SCULLION—Thank you, Mr Chairman. I put part of this question to some officers from DIMIA, with regard to appreciation of how intelligence flows—what the people are aware of. Clearly, the proposed excision legislation is to put in place a disincentive package, to principally say, 'Look, this isn't really the way to go.' I would like an appreciation of how well aware they are of the circumstances in Australia. You would be very well aware of the activities of Norforce, Topwatch and Northwatch. They have effectively empowered thousands of people—people within recreational fishing communities, people who use the water for recreation, such as yachties, and Indigenous communities—with knowledge. At the mere sight of a vessel that is inappropriate or in the wrong place or the wrong shape, those people will now immediately report to the authorities, and there is an immediate reporting process. Clearly we know that, in those circumstances, the closer they come to Australian mainland the higher the

likelihood of detection and, therefore, the possibility of being arrested and apprehended. It is basically a function of how far away they are from the mainland. Do you think that the people smugglers in Indonesia would be aware of that situation? Do you think they avail themselves of intelligence to that degree about what happens in Australia?

Commissioner Keelty—Yes, they do. We have clear evidence that people smugglers are changing their activities in response to policy that is delivered here in Australia. A glowing example is the intelligence that we have received about New Zealand suddenly becoming a destination as opposed to Australia, and also the very tangible example in recent days of the vessel that has arrived in East Timor.

Senator SCULLION—Along the same lines, Commissioner, you say you do not have a great deal to do with investigating actual asylum seekers; your role is to deal with the people who smuggle people. You may have some information on this; you may be able to assist us. You have said that the people who are seeking a migration outcome in Australia—*asylum seekers*—have an understanding. They are aware of *SIEVX* and they now seek assurances on safe arrival and those sorts of things. If they are aware of that, do you think they would be aware that they can no longer gain a migration outcome by landing on those islands if this excision legislation takes place? Do you think they would then be insisting that that is not where they end up? Do you think they would be able to avail themselves of that level of information? That has been widely reported here.

Commissioner Keelty—Yes, I do. Some of it is through deliberate strategies on behalf of the Australian government agencies, where we promote the need to come through legitimate channels to migrate to Australia. There is a campaign that is, in fact, put in place in Indonesia to advise potential passengers that islands have been excised. There is no doubt in my mind that that would be promulgated amongst the people. One of the things that operates, I guess, in our favour, in terms of the intelligence aspects of this, is that the people who are waiting to move out of Indonesia are often grouped in various locations. The information gets back to them very quickly about events that have occurred. We have seen good examples of that through the intelligence interchanges that we have had through the successful or otherwise arrival of vessels during Operation *Relax*.

Senator SCULLION—Since September, since the first excision took place, do you think that has had a substantive impact on the fact that we have not had people leave? Do you think it is because people are saying, ‘We don’t want an outcome in those places, because it doesn’t give us what we want’? Do you think that has had an impact?

Commissioner Keelty—I think it has. In terms of measurement, it goes back to the answer I gave to the deputy chair: Operation *Relax* happened at around the same time, so to give you some empirical data about it would be difficult. If I quickly add up those figures I gave you, from 1999 to 2001 there were in the order of 100 boats arriving at Ashmore Reef. That is a lot of boats arriving at Ashmore Reef in what, ostensibly, is a two- to three-year period, and then now, suddenly, there are none.

Senator SCULLION—When the chair asked a question previously, I think he was leading towards the idea that this is not really a disincentive package—that is, that this is something where people will just avoid the islands and come to the mainland if they are seeking a

migration outcome. Do you think the intelligence that you gather indicates that it is actually working as a disincentive package so people will be choosing to go elsewhere? Or do they simply say, 'We now have to go to the mainland.' What is your appreciation of that?

Commissioner Keelty—I do not think it will change the fact that there will be people trying to get to Australia per se. It will be a deterrent, but there will always be people who are trying to beat the system. This will, however, eliminate that option for them. I think that is important strictly on humanitarian grounds, because of what we have seen at Ashmore Reef; I do not know how some of those people have survived there without water or food. If the people smugglers had to change their operations to find a small atoll or a small deserted island that was part of Australia's territory then they would—that is clear. This is because, unlike the drug smuggler, who has to get the product ashore and then distribute it, the people smuggler only has to get their commodity—and I use that word sensitively—to an Australian territory where the people can put their hand up and claim asylum. That is what they are doing, and that is what this is about from a criminal perspective; it is about getting them to the nearest point to put their hand up. That is why the excision of the islands would be of assistance to us.

Senator SCULLION—From a practical point of view—and I ask you this simply because you said you have had a lot of exposure to the boats and the people who facilitate these operations—what would the differences be between the sort of boat you would need to get from Kupang to Ashmore Reef and the sort of boat you would need to get from Kupang to mainland Australia?

Commissioner Keelty—Those boats would have to be substantially different; Ashmore Reef is still a long way from Australia's mainland. Perhaps a better example is the Torres Strait. The journey between New Guinea and the first and most northern island in the Torres Strait can almost be made at low tide—you can almost walk it. Throughout the Torres Strait, we see the use of banana boats, which are not much of a vessel whatsoever; in fact, a banana boat is a runabout. If you go up to the Torres Strait, the way you get around is by runabout. So very little in terms of the sophistication of vessel or means of travel is required in some of these places. In answer to your question, you would certainly need a much more substantial vessel to get from parts of Indonesia to mainland Australia than you would need to get to Ashmore Reef.

Senator SCULLION—We have seen an awful lot of boats—substantial vessels—arrive on mainland Australia in earlier times, and they have subsequently been destroyed or disposed of; I am assuming they do not boomerang back and get used again. I am going to the availability of the sort of resources you would need to get from, let us say, Indonesia or Kupang to mainland Australia. Would there be lots of vessels that could do that? There might, for example, be a lot of vessels you could use to get to Ashmore Reef, but would there be the same amount of vessels in which you could, for example, then steam from there to mainland Australia? Do you know much about that sort of situation?

Commissioner Keelty—I do not know specific details but, if I can compare it to other types of crime that we see, you would need different vessels. The vessels are probably not as plentiful in a place like Kupang. If you travel further west to some of the more substantial Indonesian islands you might find better vessels available, and any number of vessels are available in other parts of Asia. But you would certainly be limited. You would have to change your tactics yet again.

Senator SCULLION—What I am going to is that this proposed excision will make the percentage of those vessels available that are actually able to make the voyage far lower. Would that be right?

Commissioner Keelty—That would be right. The people smugglers would have to rethink their strategies, and the cost involved—the infrastructure cost to them in committing the crime—would increase.

Senator SCULLION—Mr McDevitt, could you share with me the activities, in a generic sense, of the people who are people smugglers? Do they just smuggle people, or are they often involved in legitimate business activities? What do they do when they are not people smuggling?

Federal Agent McDevitt—It would be fair to say that they engage in a range of activities and that the motive is predominantly one of profit. They tend to be opportunists in relation to whatever criminal enterprises may present themselves. You heard the commissioner speak about commodities. The reality is that if there is easy money to be made from facilitating the illegal movement of people that might be the activity that these people engage in, or they may determine that facilitating the movement of drugs, weapons or some other commodity may be the best enterprise to engage in at that particular point in time. It is a long answer, but certainly these people are generalists rather than specialists.

Senator STEPHENS—We heard from DIMIA this morning about a funded regional cooperation model that is being used to assist in processing claims for asylum seekers. Does the AFP have any formal role in that regional cooperation model?

Federal Agent McDevitt—We participate in a number of cooperative efforts around the region, but it would be fair to say that most of the AFP's efforts are focused on engaging with the Indonesian National Police and other police and law enforcement agencies in the region. That is really the main aim for the AFP.

Senator STEPHENS—Another issue that was raised in the previous submission was that the outcome of that regional cooperational model was to share the burden of the migration outcomes for some of these people seeking refugee status. Does the AFP have a formal role—rather than just an advisory or intelligence gathering role—in that whole process?

Federal Agent McDevitt—It would be fair to say that the product the AFP brings to the table is generally from an intelligence perspective and also relates to facilitation of, and liaison with, law enforcement in the region.

CHAIR—Thank you very much for your assistance.